

§ 5.21

withhold a record under one exemption, and on appeal we determine that that exemption does not apply, then examining the record in the appeal stage for the purpose of determining whether a different exemption applies is included in *review*. It does not include the process of researching or resolving general legal or policy issues regarding exemptions.

Search means looking for records or portions of records responsive to a request. It includes reading and interpreting a request, and also page-by-page and line-by-line examination to identify responsive portions of a document. However, it does not include line-by-line examination where merely duplicating the entire page would be a less expensive and quicker way to comply with the request.

Subpart B—Obtaining a Record

§ 5.21 How to request records.

(a) *General*. Our policy is to answer all requests, both oral and written, for records. However, in order to have the rights given you by the FOIA and by this regulation (for example, the right to appeal if we deny your request and the right to have our decisions reviewed in court), you must either make your request in writing or make it orally to a Freedom of Information Officer. Freedom of Information Officers and their staffs may put in writing any oral requests they receive directly.

(b) *Addressing requests*. It will help us to handle your request sooner if you address it to the Freedom of Information Officer in the HHS unit that is most likely to have the records you want. (See § 5.31 of this Part for a list of Freedom of Information Officers.) If you cannot determine this, send the request to: HHS Freedom of Information Officer, 645-F, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20201. Write the words "Freedom of Information Act Request" on the envelope and letter.

(c) *Details in the letter*. You should provide details that will help us identify and find the records you are requesting. If there is insufficient information, we will ask you for more. In-

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clude your telephone number(s) to help us reach you if we have questions. If you are not sure how to write your request or what details to include, communicate with a Freedom of Information Officer.

§ 5.22 Requests not handled under the FOIA.

(a) We will not handle your request under the FOIA and this regulation to the extent it asks for records that are currently available, either from HHS or from another part of the Federal Government, under a statute that provides for charging fees for those records. For example, we will not handle your request under the FOIA and this regulation to the extent it asks for detailed earnings statements under the Social Security program, or records currently available from the Government Printing Office of the National Technical Information Service.

(b) We will not handle your request under the FOIA and this regulation to the extent it asks for records that are distributed by an HHS program office as part of its regular program activity, for example, health education brochures distributed by the Public Health Service or public information leaflets distributed by the Social Security Administration.

§ 5.23 Referral of requests outside the Department.

If you request records that were created by, or provided to us by, another Federal agency, and if that agency asserts control over the records, we may refer the records and your request to that agency. We may likewise refer requests for classified records to the agency that classified them. In these cases, the other agency will process and respond to your request, to the extent it concerns those records, under that agency's regulation, and you need not make a separate request to that agency. We will notify you when we refer your request to another agency.

§ 5.24 Responding to your request.

(a) *Retrieving records*. The Department is required to furnish copies of records only when they are in our possession or we can retrieve them from storage. If we have stored the records